

Arabic sources for the theology of the early monastic movement in Egypt / Samuel Rubenson. — Extrait de : Parole de l'Orient : revue semestrielle des études syriaques et arabes chrétiennes : recherches orientales : revue d'études et de recherches sur les églises de langue syriaque. — vol. 16 (1990-1991), pp. 33-47.

Titre de couverture : Actes du 3e congrès international d'études arabes chrétiennes, Louvain-la-neuve, septembre 1988. — Bibliogr.

I. Monachisme et ordres religieux — Egypte. II. Théologie — Histoire — ca 30-600 (église primitive). III. Littérature chrétienne primitive.

PER L1183 / FT36796P

ARABIC SOURCES FOR THE THEOLOGY OF THE EARLY MONASTIC MOVEMENT IN EGYPT*

BY

Samuel RUBENSON

A great number of texts, relating to the early monastic movement in Egypt, either unknown or fragmentary in Coptic, are preserved in Arabic translations. Given the importance of the monastic tradition for the Coptic church, and the comparatively rapid transmission from Coptic to Arabic among the Christians in Egypt in the ninth and tenth centuries, this is only to be expected. What is remarkable, however, is the extent to which these texts are generally neglected by scholars working on early monasticism. The reason for this lies partly in the lack of critical editions with translations and commentaries, and partly in a wide spread disrepute of Arabic as well as Coptic sources. With the growing interest in Coptology in general, largely due to the discovery of the Nag Hammadi texts, and in early Egyptian monasticism in particular, a new awareness of the importance of the Coptic and Copto-Arabic sources is visible. Unfortunately the Coptic sources are often very badly preserved. Fragments from codices are scattered all over the world and large lacunae occur in almost every text, making identification and edition of the pieces rather difficult. Here the Arabic translations, usually

*) ABBREVIATIONS:

- GRAF = Georg GRAF, *Catalogue de manuscrits arabes chrétiens conservés au Caire*, Vatican, 1934.
- Rawḍa = *Kitāb rawḍat al-nufūs fī rasā'il al-qiddīs Anṭūniyūs*, (ed. by Anbā Murqus al-Anṭūnī), Cairo, 1899.
- SIMAIKA = Marcus SIMAIKA Pasha, *Catalogue of the Coptic and Arabic Manuscripts in the Coptic Museum, the Patriarchate, the Principal Churches of Cairo and Alexandria and the Monasteries of Egypt*, I-II, Cairo, 1942.
- ZANETTI = Ugo ZANETTI, *Les manuscrits de Dair Abū Maqār*, (Cahiers d'orientalisme 11), Genève, 1986.

much better preserved, are of great importance¹. For a number of Coptic texts the Arabic version is also the only one extant.

A problem is, of course, how we are to know if an Arabic text is a translation of an early Coptic or Greek text or a late text written down in Arabic. In many cases, especially in monastic literature, there is little in the text to suggest date, place and language of composition, not to speak of author, and many Arabic texts attributed to early monastic fathers are definitely much later compositions. We are also still very far from having enough data on Coptic Christian Arabic to be able to separate original works and translations on linguistic grounds, and it is also extremely difficult and often inconclusive to argue on the basis of single linguistic phenomena². There is, however, little reason to doubt that most of the important and widely read monastic material was composed in Coptic, or Greek, before Arabic came into common use in the monasteries, probably around the eleventh century A.D.. A number of texts can also be dated with great certainty to the early stages of the monastic movement, i.e. the fourth and fifth centuries and attributed to certain authors, known to have written in Coptic. An analysis of the context in which a text is transmitted can also help us to establish its origins.

But we still have a long way to go before the Arabic sources on early monasticism are made available to historians and theologians. The first task must be to make an updated and more detailed description of the texts than the one in volume I of Graf's *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*. This has to be based upon a careful analysis of each manuscript with reference to Greek, Coptic, Syriac and other parallels. Here the collection to which a text belongs, as well as the source used for the translation and finally the subsequent transmission of the text, is of great importance, all facts unfortunately almost completely neglected by Graf.

1) The importance of the Arabic sources on early Egyptian christianity and the need in Coptic studies for specialists in Christian Arabic was pointed out by Khalil SAMIR, «Arabic Sources for Early Egyptian Christianity», *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*, Philadelphia 1986, pp. 82-97.

2) For a discussion of the question of Egyptian phenomena in Middle Arabic see Khalil SAMIR, «Contribution à l'étude du moyen-arabe des Coptes», *Le Muséon* 80 (1967), pp. 153-209 and 81 (1968), pp. 5-77.

The monastic tradition is usually, not only in Arabic, preserved in what could be called anthologies, *i.e.* collections of sayings, letters, rules, treatises and stories connected with a special monastic father, or with a variety of fathers. These anthologies all have their own history, their own sources, their adaptations and modifications, and in many cases manuscripts thus have to be regarded as texts in themselves, not only as randomly compiled libraries of texts. Texts belonging together in an Arabic manuscript of this type generally originate in a common collection already in Coptic. The reconstruction of the White Monastery codices, scattered in fragments in European and American libraries, give a new insight into Coptic collections of this type. In a way the monastic anthologies are the heirs of earlier proverbial anthologies, such as the Late Egyptian and Jewish wisdom collections and the Greek gnomologia of the hellenistic period, known primarily from Egyptian papyri. Like these they were created for educational purposes, and are still so used in the monasteries of Egypt³.

In this paper I would like to mention some important early monastic texts preserved in Arabic in collections of Copto-Arabic provenience and to suggest that some of these anthologies were also once extant in Coptic⁴. I will have to limit myself to give a few examples on some of the best-known fathers of Egyptian monasticism, with an emphasis upon the large, otherwise only fragmentarily known, corpus of writings by St. Antony. The most wide spread monastic anthology in Arabic, as well as in other languages, is the collections of sayings of the fathers, usually known as the *Bustān al-Ruhbān*. This includes not only texts from the different versions of the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, but also translations of the *Historia Monachorum* and the *Historia*

3) For the Late Egyptian background see Miriam LICHTHEIM, *Late Egyptian Wisdom Literature in the International Context. A Study of Demotic Instructions*, (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 52) Freiburg & Göttingen 1983, esp. pp. 184-196. The Jewish background is emphasized by William R. SCHOEDEL, «Jewish Wisdom and the Formation of the Christian Ascetic», in *Aspects of Wisdom in Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Robert L. WILKEN, Notre Dame & London 1975, pp. 169-199. The early monastic use of collections of sayings is described by Philip ROUSSEAU, *Ascetics, Authority and the Church in the Age of Jerome and Cassian*, Oxford 1978, pp. 68-76, and a number of early vitae, as for instance *Vita Pachomii*, is simply a collection of traditions about and sayings by a certain father.

4) For the question of how to determine the provenience of a manuscript see Khalil SAMIR, «Arabic Sources for Early Egyptian Christianity», *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*, Philadelphia 1986, pp. 85-86.

Lausiaca. The fact that these collections are left out here, does not mean that they are unimportant as sources, but the task to identify all the pieces is only begun and extremely time-consuming, and it is also much more difficult to establish a Coptic background for these texts, since they were to a large extent originally written in Greek and spread in all languages and areas of the early church.

I. PACHOMIOS

The best known part of the Arabic sources on early monastic theology is the texts dealing with Pachomios. The importance of the Arabic versions of the «Life of Pachomios» was acknowledged already by Crum, and according to Veilleux one of them is the only version preserving separately the two sources for the Life of Pachomios⁵. It is thus astonishing, given the great interest in Pachomian studies, that there is no satisfactory edition of the Arabic versions. One reason is the problem of the relations between the different Arabic texts. There are at least three different Arabic recensions, one based on the Sahidic version, a second based on the Greek version, and a third being a compilation of different texts. The only two editions yet made date from the 19th century and were based on single manuscripts without any comparison of the different recensions⁶. With few exceptions the «Life» is preserved in manuscripts of Coptic provenience, usually as the only text of the manuscript, but occasionally together with texts from the Antonian corpus. The most important text belongs to the version based upon the Sahidic text and is preserved in a manuscript of Coptic origin containing a number of other important unedited vitae⁷.

Of the Arabic version of the rule of Pachomios, preserved in a number of manuscripts, there is, as far as I know, no critical edition at all. The

5) See Walter Erwing CRUM, *Theological Texts from Coptic Papyri*, ed. with an Appendix upon the Arabic and Coptic Versions of the Life of Pachomius, in *Anecdota Oxoniensia*, Semitic Series XII, Oxford 1913, pp. 172-183; and Armand VEILLEUX, *Pachomian Koinonia*, I, (Cistercian Studies 45), Kalamazoo 1980, pp. 6-8 and 16-18. A complete survey of the Arabic versions is still wanting.

6) See Émile AMÉLINEAU, *Monuments pour servir à l'histoire de l'Égypte chrétienne au IV^e siècle. Vol. II: Histoire de saint Pakhôme et de ses communautés*, (Annales du Musée Guimet 17) Paris 1889, pp. 337-711; and *Kitāb al-qiddīs Anbā Bāḥūmiyūs ab al-šarika*, ed. by ‘Abd al-Masīḥ al-Mas‘ūdī al-Baramūsī, Cairo 1891.

7) *Göttingen arab.* 114.

importance of the Arabic version of the homily by Pachomios «On account of a rancorous monk», also preserved in Coptic, has been pointed out by Father Samir⁸. Except for the two manuscripts which preserve the homily separately it is also included in one recension of the Arabic version of his Life. A number of other not yet identified Pachomiana are also preserved in Arabic, usually in connection with collections of sayings and stories about other early monks, as for instance in the Antonian corpus to be discussed below.

There is, however, no real corpus of Pachomian material in Arabic, preserved as a unit in the manuscript tradition. The Life of Pachomios is generally transmitted either with other Lives, or as the singel text of the manuscript. The rule is likewise always transmitted with other monastic rules, and the homily with other homilies. An exception is the tendency to include within the «Life of Pachomios» texts like the above-mentioned homily. Of the letters of Pachomios known in Coptic, Greek and Latin there are still no Arabic versions known. It seems evident that even if Pachomios has attracted most of the attention in recent studies in early monasticism, his importance for the monastic literary tradition in Egypt has been far less than the importance of Antony or Macarios.

II. MACARIOS

The fact that the rich manuscript evidence in Arabic for the homilies of Pseudo-Macarios is partly transmitted under the name of Symeon, sometimes mistakenly identified with Symeon the Stylite, has led scholars to identify the author with a Symeon of Mesopotamia⁹. Besides his betterknown Pseudo-Macarian tradition there are, however, a number of other texts preserved in Arabic under the name of Macarios, most notably in a Macarian collection of Coptic origin containing among other texts his life, a history on the two Macarii, the book on the consecration of the sanctuary of Benjamin, the translation of his relics, and two letters¹⁰. The «Life», attributed to Serapion

8) CPG 2354. Khalil SAMIR, «Témoins arabes de la catéchèse de Pachôme à propos d'un moine rancunier», OCP 42 (1976), pp. 494-508.

9) See Hermann DÖRRIES, *Symeon von Mesopotamien. Die Überlieferung der messalianischen «Makarios»-Schriften*, TU 55,1, Leipzig 1941, pp. 337-377; and Werner STROTHMANN, *Die arabische Makariostradition. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Mönchtums*, Göttingen 1934; IDEM, *Makarios/Symeon. Das arabische Sondergut*, Göttingen 1975; cf. review of it by Khalil SAMIR, OCP 44 (1978), pp. 494-498.

10) *St. Macarius Hagiography* 18, 19 (ZANETTI 383, 384).

of Thmuis, is also found separately in a great number of manuscripts and the Coptic original is also preserved both in Sahidic and Bohairic and edited¹¹. Even though it is evident that the attribution is wrong and that the «Life» is a later compilation it gives evidence to the strong and early connection between the Antonian and Macarian traditions¹². There are, moreover, other Lives of Macarios preserved in Arabic, but they are still waiting for editions and comparisons with each other.

The two letters are, except for the Arabic, only preserved in Georgian, and one of them also in Ethiopic¹³. The first deals with the monastic virtues and the need to follow the fathers, the saints, and the second is the message of St. Macarios to his sons to repent on account of what has been reported about them by his guardian angel. Even if the letters normally are transmitted together, one of them, the letter about the glory of the saints, is also found in the most important of the manuscripts containing the corpus of writings attributed to St. Antony, another proof of the interrelation between the traditions¹⁴. A third letter on virginity is also to be found in the same manuscript. A number of other not yet identified texts dealing with Macarios are also found scattered in the different monastic collections.

III. EVAGRIOS

Another early father of importance within as well as outside the Copto-Arabic tradition is Evagrios. Due to his condemnation by the church, he is preserved in his original tongue only poorly and under false name. In both

11) CPG 2501. BHO 573. The Coptic text is preserved in three Bohairic manuscripts (*Vatican Coptic* 59, 62, 64), and edited by Émile AMÉLINEAU, *Monuments pour servir à l'histoire de l'Égypte chrétienne au IV^e siècle, Vol. III: Histoire des Monastères de la Basse-Égypte*, (Annales du Musée Guimet 25), Paris 1894, pp. 46-117, whereas the Sahidic text is still unpublished, see Tito ORLANDI, *Elementi di lingua e letteratura copta*, Milan 1970, p. 80. A Greek version is also still unedited. For Arabic manuscripts see GCAL I, p. 395; SIMAIKA II, no. 639, and ZANETTI, nos. 383, 384, 385, 386, 397 and 482. For a discussion of the text see Hugh EVELYN-WHITE, *Monasteries of the Wadi Natroun*, II, New York 1932, pp. 465-468.

12) A Life of Antony is also attributed to Serapion in some Arabic manuscripts, see GCAL I, 459.

13) See Ugo ZANETTI, «Deux lettres de Macaire conservées en arabe et en géorgien», *Le Muséon* 99 (1986), pp. 319-333.

14) *Vatican Arabic* 398. Of this manuscript there are two copies in the Maronite College in Rome, Mss. nos. 44 and 302, not mentioned in GCAL I.

Syriac and Arabic he is, however, well represented. Since there are only a small number of fragments of Evagrius preserved in Coptic, it can be doubted whether a larger Coptic corpus ever existed, unless it can be proved that at least parts of the Arabic version has a Coptic origin¹⁵. Whereas the Syriac texts have been edited, there are, however, still only two short Arabic texts edited and no investigation into the question of original language of the Arabic Evagriana has yet been made.

The main collection of Evagrian texts in Arabic is preserved in at least four manuscripts of Copto-Arabic Provenience¹⁶, and a Coptic origin seems rather likely, especially since there does not seem to be any interrelation between the Syriac and the Arabic corpus. This collection includes not only well known texts such as the *Tractatus ad Eulogium*¹⁷, the *De vitiis quae opposita sunt virtutibus*¹⁸, the *De oratione*¹⁹, the *Epistula ad Anatolium*²⁰, the *Antirrheticus*²¹, the *De octo spiritibus malitiae*²², and the *De malignis cogitationibus*²³, but also a number of sayings and scholia, a letter to Lucius, known only in Arabic, as well as a few texts falsely attributed to this Evagrius and two different lives of Evagrius. In a manuscript containing the Antonian corpus, the two first texts of this collection precede the Antonian texts²⁴. Other texts known in Arabic but outside the corpus are the *Kephalaia*

15) The Coptic Evagriana has been collected by J. MUYLDERMANS, «Evagriana Coptica», *Le Muséon* 76 (1963), pp. 271-276. New light has been brought upon the collection by Schenke in his analysis of a Coptic ostrakon in Berlin. See Hans-Martin SCHENKE, «Ein koptischer Evagrius», in *Graeco-Coptica. Griechen und Kopten im byzantinischen Ägypten*, ed. Peter Nagel, Halle 1984, pp. 219-230.

16) *Cairo Coptic Patriarchate Theology* 247 (SIMAIKA 552), *Paris Arabe* 157A, *Vatican Arabic* 93, *Dayr al-Suryān Ascetic* 174. The manuscript of the monastery of the Syrians was printed by the same monastery in 1979. A survey of the texts and their contents is given by Khalil SAMIR, «Evagre le Pontique dans la tradition arabo-copte» to be published in the acts of the Fourth International Congress on Coptic Studies.

17) *CPG* 2447 not complete in Arabic.

18) *CPG* 2448 only parts preserved in Arabic.

19) *CPG* 2452. The Arabic is edited with the fragmentary Syriac version by Irénée HAUSHERR, «Le 'De Oratione' d'Évagre le Pontique en syriaque et en arabe», *OCP* 5 (1939), pp. 7-71.

20) *CPG* 2430. In the Arabic the opening letter to Anatolius is a separate text.

21) *CPG* 2434; The Arabic version is not mentioned in *CPG*.

22) *CPG* 2451.

23) *CPG* 2450; the Arabic version is not mentioned in *CPG*.

24) *St. Macarius Hom.* 24 (ZANETTI 345).

*Gnostica*²⁵ and the *Expositio in orationem dominicam*²⁶. For the first a Syriac origin would be plausible, of the second text a Coptic version which seems to be the original is known.

IV. ANTONIOS

The probably largest and maybe also most important single collection of Arabic sources on early Egyptian monasticism is a corpus of texts attributed to St. Antony. Since only a minor part of this collection is known in other languages, the Arabic version deserves more attention than has hitherto been given to it. The Antonian material is primarily preserved as a fixed corpus in a great number of manuscripts, with only slight variations in the contents²⁷. In some of these manuscripts an identical colophon occurs in which it is stated that the first two texts were translated from two Coptic manuscripts in 1270/71 A.D., thus giving evidence to an earlier Antonian collection in Coptic. The Coptic version is also attested in minor fragments and in quotations in later Coptic authors. To this main collection various other texts on Antony, as well as a choice of other monastic texts, have been added in single manuscripts. Other manuscripts contain parts of the main collection, or single texts, together with other early monastic material²⁸.

The main collection consists of a corpus of twenty letters, a series of monastic exhortations called *Spiritual Teaching and Holy Commandments* (*ta'lim rūḥānī wa-waṣāyā muqaddasa*), a collection of twenty admonitions (*ta'ālīm*), a rule and a collection of sayings and anecdotes, including a short admonition and a collection of commandments, terminated by a series of questions to the fathers on the meaning of the sayings of Antony. An Arabic edition of the first part of this collection, *i.e.* the four major texts and the

25) CPG 2432.

26) CPG 2461.

27) The complete collection is known to me in the following mss.: *Cairo Coptic Museum Lit.* 88 (SIMAIKA 193, Graf 93); *Cairo Coptic Patriarchate Theol.* 168 (SIMAIKA 518, Graf 485); *Cairo Coptic Patriarchate Theol.* 221 (SIMAIKA 385, missing in Graf); *Cairo Coptic Patriarchate Theol.* 289 (SIMAIKA 461, Graf 484); *St. Macarius Hom.* 23, 24 (ZANETTI 344, 345); *St. Antony Theol.* 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 185, 186, 187, 188, 192, 298; *Vatican Arabic* 398.

28) *Cairo Coptic Patriarchate Theol.* 121 (SIMAIKA 276, Graf 384); *St. Antony Theol.* 191; *St. Macarius Bibl.* 13 (ZANETTI 13); *St. Macarius Hag.* 14 (ZANETTI 380); *Aleppo Sbath* 987, 1015; *Beirut* 482; *Birmingham Mingana Syriac* 177, 232, 605; *Paris Arabe* 4784; *Bodl. arab.* 65; *Vatican Syriac* 424.

admonition, was printed in Cairo in 1899 with the title: *Kitāb rauḍat al-naḥs fī rasā'il al-Qiddīs Anṭūniyūs*. Here these texts are followed by an unidentified sermon attributed to Antony and a summary of his sayings, texts not known otherwise. A Latin translation of the collection was published in two volumes by the Maronite Ibrāhīm al-Ḥāqilānī (Abraham Ecchellensis) in the 17th century and later reprinted in the *Patrologia Graeca*²⁹.

A. TWENTY LETTERS³⁰

The first seven of the twenty letters are known also in a Georgian and a Latin version, both based upon a lost Greek text, and partly in Syriac and Coptic, and are generally accepted as genuine. There are, however, major differences between the versions, but no thorough comparison of them has yet been made³¹. The Arabic version, being considerably shorter than the Latin and somewhat shorter than the Georgian, has hitherto been almost completely neglected and regarded as a late compilation of extracts. The other thirteen letters correspond roughly with the letters of Ammonas preserved in Greek and Syriac, and in part in Armenian, Ethiopic and Georgian, but the Arabic version of these letters does contain some additional material not found in the other versions. The attribution to Ammonas is, however, questionable, and the two groups of letters do have much in common. A Coptic version of all twenty letters existed in the twelfth century, as evidenced by Abū-l-Barākāt, and quotations in the fifth century Coptic authors Shenute and Besa prove that the letters circulated in Coptic under the name of Antony already in the beginning of the fifth century³².

29) Abraham ECHELLENSIS, *Sanctissimi patris nostri Beati Antonii magni... epistolae viginti. Nunc primum ex Arabico Latini juris factae*, Paris 1641 and *Sapientissimi patris nostri Antonii magni Abbatis Regulae, Sermones, Documenta, Admonitiones, Responsiones, et Vita duplex. Omnia nunc primum ex Arabica lingua Latine reddita*, Paris 1646. Reprinted in PG 40, 999-1100.

30) CPG 2330. *Vatican Arab.* 398, f. 1v-65v; *St. Antony Theol.* 177, f. 1r-58r; PG 40, 999C-1066B; *Rawḍa*, pp. 10-139. My references are in the following limited to the first of the Antonian and to the Vatican manuscripts, as well as to the Cairo edition and to the Latin translation in the PG.

31) A comparison and analysis of the fourth letter, the only letter fully preserved in Coptic, is to be published, Samuel RUBENSON, «Der vierte Antoniusbrief und die Frage nach der Echtheit und Originalsprache der Antoniusbriefe», *Oriens Christianus* 1989.

32) See Samuel RUBENSON, «The Arabic Version of the Letters of St. Antony», in SAMIR, *Actes II* (1986), pp. 19-29.

B. THE SPIRITUAL TEACHING³³

Apart from the complete Arabic version, the *Spiritual Teaching* is only preserved in Coptic in two very short fragments³⁴. It consists of a series of short admonitions and sentences resembling «Ecclesiastes», the «Sentences of Sextus», and Late Egyptian wisdom texts. A passage on the unreliability of men occurs also in the «*Teachings of Silvanus*», a Christian wisdom text in the Nag Hammadi Corpus. It has been suggested that the Antonian text is a later collection dependent upon the *Teachings of Silvanus*, or that both are dependent upon a common source, independently translated from Greek or Demotic³⁵. It is, however, premature to try to settle this question before the Arabic text is properly edited and studied in its entirety. The text does have some interesting affinities with the twenty letters mentioned above, and there is little in it to suggest a later date. The fact that it deals with monasteries, which is often taken as to prove a later date, is no argument against an attribution, since we now know that the monastic movement was already well under way in Antony's days.

C. THE TWENTY ADMONITIONS³⁶

These are known only in Arabic. Apart from the corpus of Antonian writings they are also preserved separately or together with parts of it in some manuscripts. They deal with the monastic virtues and the main elements of monastic life, such as the guarding of the heart (*ḥifẓ al-qalb*), long-suffering (*ṭul al-rūḥ*), guilelessness (*ʿadam al-makr*), humility (*al-ʿittidāʿ*), purity (*al-ṭahāra*), silence (*al-sukūt*), discernment and understanding (*al-ḥikma w-al-*

33) CPG 2349d. *Vatican Arab.* 398, f. 66r-70r; *St. Antony Theol.* 177, f. 58r-82v; PG 40, 1073C-1080A; *Rawḍa*, pp. 10-139.

34) For text and discussion see Wolf-Peter FUNK, «Ein doppelt überliefertes Stück spätägyptischer Weisheit», *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* 103 (1976), pp. 8-21.

35) In addition to Funk see the discussions in Yvonne JANSSENS, *Les leçons de Silvanos*, (Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi, Section Textes 13), Quebec 1983, pp. 53-54 and 116-117; Miriam LICHTHEIM, *Late Egyptian Wisdom Literature in the International Context. A Study of Demotic Instructions*, (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 52), Freiburg 1973, pp. 191-195.; and Roelf van den BROEK, «The Theology of the Teachings of Silvanos», *Vigiliae Christianae* 40 (1986), pp. 18 and 23 n. 23.

36) CPG 2349a. *Vatican Arab.* 398, f. 70v-82r; *St. Antony Theol.* 177, f. 83r-97v; PG 40, 963C-978A; *Rawḍa*, pp. 150-176.

fahm), timidity (*al-ḥiṣma*), zeal (*al-qarīḥa*), veneration and virginity (*al-ʿibāda w-al-batūliyya*).

D. THE RULE OF ST ANTONY³⁷

The rule is also preserved only in Arabic, and is the only part of the collection, except for the first seven letters, studied in detail. Of this Arabic text two different Latin translations exist, based upon different manuscripts, and furthermore supplied with a number of paragraphs borrowed from the «Arabic rule of Isaiah of Scetis»³⁸. The rule has close affinities with the *Vita Antonii* and it definitely belongs to the early monastic period. There are also some very close parallels between the rule and a text, only known to exist in Arabic, called «*Summary of the teaching of the 318 fathers of Nicea*», preserved in some of the manuscripts containing the Antonian corpus as well as the rule of Isaiah. Even if it is unlikely that the rule as such originated with Antony, it was, no doubt, compiled in his tradition and within the period of early monasticism.

E. OTHER MINOR TEXTS

The collection of Antonian texts following the rule in the manuscripts begins with a short series of admonitions or rules on monastic life introduced with the words: «If a brother comes to you and relates his thoughts...» (*idā atāka 'aḥ wa-ḥaddaṭaka bi-'afkārīhi...*)³⁹. These admonitions are, at least partly, directed to a superior of a monastery and presuppose later developments within Egyptian monasticism. They are followed by eleven of

37) CPG 2349c. *Vatican Arab.* 398, f. 82r-83v; *St. Antony Theol.* 177, f. 97v-99v; PG 40, 1065D-1072A; *Rawḍa*, pp. 176-179.

38) The Latin translations were both made by Abraham Ecchellensis (Ibrahīm al-Hāqilānī), one for Holstenius and his *Codex Regularum*, and the second for his own edition. Both are reprinted in two columns in PG 40, 1065-1074. The paragraphs 58-80 and 36-48 respectively are the part supplied from Isaiah of Scetis. See Bernhard CONTZEN, *Die sogenannte Regel des heiligen Antonius*, (Beilage zum Jahresbericht des humanistischen Gymnasiums Metten 1895-1898), Metten 1898; Joseph-Marie SAUGET, «La double recension arabe des préceptes aux novices de l'abbé Isaïe de Scété», *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant*, III, Vatican 1964, pp. 299-313; and Antoine MOKBEL, «La règle de Saint Antoine le grand», *Melto* 2 (1966), pp. 207-227; Khalil SAMIR, «Saint Antoine le Grand», *Encyclopédie Maronite I*, Kaslik, 1990.

39) *Vatican Arab.* 398, f. 83v; *St. Antony Theol.* 177, f. 99v-100r; PG 40, 1079BC; *Rawḍa*, pp. 179-180.

the sayings known from the Greek alphabetical collection, however in a completely different order. After these sayings follows a short treatise, in reality a series of commandments for him who wants to be saved⁴⁰. This text does have some very close affinities with the rule of Isaiah, on which it seems to be dependant⁴¹. Next we find a new collection of sayings together with five questions put to Antony, and his answers⁴². Most of the sayings can easily be identified as the equivalents of Greek sayings in the alphabetical collection, some of the sayings are also to be found in other collections. In one saying there is a remarkable change of names. Antony in this text praises the three pillars Athanasius, Pachomius and Macarius, whereas in the other known versions Pambo has been substituted for Macarius. After a story about when Hilarion was a disciple of Antony the collection is summed up in an interesting series of explanations on his sayings by the fathers, a text of importance for the study of the history of monastic spirituality in the East⁴³.

The Latin translation of the Arabic corpus by Ibrahīm al-Ḥāqilānī (Abraham Ecchellensis) differs considerably from the known manuscripts both in the order of the text and in the wording⁴⁴. Some minor pieces are also absent, and instead of these there are a number of additional texts with almost no relation to Antony. It has always been assumed that al-Ḥāqilānī worked on the basis of *Vatican Arab.* 398 and *Vatican Syriac* 424 (a garšūnī manuscript), but in that case he must have felt himself at great liberty to handle his model as he liked, and either he deliberately changed the Arabic text, which is very unlikely, or he misunderstood the Arabic, which is even less plausible. In a number of cases where he obviously had problems in understanding the Arabic text he added explanatory phrases. Until we find

40) *Vatican Arab.* 398, f. 86r-88r; *St. Antony Theol.* 177, f. 103r-106r; *PG* 40, 1079D-1082D. The Cairo edition ends before the sayings with an otherwise unknown sermon attributed to St. Antony.

41) See Antoine MOKBEL, «La règle de Saint Antoine le grand», *Melto* 2 (1966), pp. 217-220.

42) *Vatican Arab.* 398, f. 90v-100v; *St. Anthony Theology* 177, f. 106r-109r; *PG* 40, 1093D-1096B, 1097C-1100D (the Latin text does not follow the order of the manuscripts).

43) *Vatican Arab.* 398, f. 90v-100v; *St. Anthony Theology* 177, f. 109r-123v; *PG* 40, 1083D-1094C, 1095D-1098B.

44) The statements about the correspondence between manuscripts and editions in *GCAL* I, pp. 457-458, and in MOKBEL pp. 210-213 are unfortunately too summarized to give correct information about the complex relation between the manuscripts and the edition by al-Ḥāqilānī and its subsequent reprint in *PG* 40.

an Arabic manuscript which fits the Latin text of al-Ḥāqilānī the question of his model and his method remains a puzzle.

To this main collection several manuscripts have additional texts dealing with Antony, *i.e.* a sermon delivered to the sons of Pachomius, which is a variant of the story in the *Vita Pachomii* of the visit of Theodor and Zacchaeus to Antony when he was ill⁴⁵. To the Antonian texts a collection of sayings of other fathers is usually added. With this collection a number of extracts from writings by Isaac of Niniveh and Isaiah of Scetis/Gaza are included in a number of manuscripts. Other texts occurring in this context are writings of Pachomius, Macarius of Egypt, Evagrius, Stephen of Thebe, Shenute, Basilus, Cassianus and Barsanuphius.

The various Lives of Antony extant in Arabic, are not, however, except for one or two manuscripts⁴⁶, preserved together with the Antonian collection, but with other vitae, especially those of Paulos of Thebe and Macarius of Egypt. In contrast to the main corpus of Antonian writings, which is almost exclusively found in manuscripts of Coptic provenience, the *Vita* is found also in a number of non-Coptic collections. There are, however, apparently a number of different vitae of Antony in Arabic, and an investigation is urgently needed, since it is quite possible that a solution to the problems discussed in the current debate on the original version and the authorship of the *Vita Antonii*, could be brought closer if the Arabic versions were studied and edited⁴⁷. Some of the problems related to the Ethiopic version, of which an edition is being prepared, might also be clarified if the Arabic versions were properly studied, since it most probably is based upon an Arabic text⁴⁸.

45) This text is not identical with the sermon published in *Rawḍa*, pp. 180-184 quoted in *GCAL* I, 458, 1. 3, as suggested by ZANETTI p. 50 (*St. Macarius Homilies* 23, 24), but with *Vita Pachomii* SBo 126-129; G120).

46) *St. Antony Theol.* 178; *Beirut* 482;

47) For this debate see René DRAGUET, *La vie primitive de S. Antoine. Discussion et traduction*, CSCO 418, Louvain 1980, p. 104*-112*; timothy BARNES, «Angel of Light or Mystic Initiate? The Problem of the *Life of Antony*», *Journal of Theological Studies* 37 (1986), pp. 353-368; and Louise ABRAMOWSKI, «Vertritt die syrische Fassung die ursprüngliche Gestalt der *Vita Antonii*?», *Mélanges Antoine Guillaumont* (in press).

48) For the Ethiopic version of the *Vita Antonii* see Louis LELOIR, «Le prophétisme ecclésial d'Antoine», *After Chalcedon. Studies in Theology and Church History offered to Professor Albert van Roey for his 70th birthday*, Leuven 1985, pp. 217-231.

V. OTHERS

Among other early Egyptian monastic fathers, Mose, the Ethiopian, is represented in Arabic with a letter, a dialogue, teachings and a number of sayings, all unedited⁴⁹. There is also an unedited «Life of Moses» in the same collection of texts translated from Coptic as the best witness to the «Life of Pachomios» and a «Life of Bishoi» attributed to John the short. A «Life of Bishoi» is also known in Syriac in two recensions, and an edition of the Arabic Life, most probably translated from Coptic, considering the collections in which it is found, could, if edited and studied, be a new source of importance⁵⁰. Another important father, Abba Poimen, is also represented by a Vita in Arabic. The only other text with this Vita preserved is a fragment of the original Coptic Life, from which the Arabic is translated. The «Life of Arsenios», extant in both Greek and Coptic, is also preserved in a number of Arabic manuscripts, of which some may have been based upon a Coptic text⁵¹. In addition there are a number of anecdotes on Arsenios, as well as some sayings and homilies in the Arabic Arseniana⁵².

VI. CONCLUSION

Even if this article only has pointed out some interesting examples of Arabic versions of early monastic material otherwise little or not at all known, it is evident that there is much important material preserved in Arabic. Before this material can be used by historians and theologians as sources for the early monastic movement, they have to be properly catalogized, studied and edited, and this should always be done in relation to the Coptic fragments extant.

49) Mss. include *Strasbourg Oriental* 150 and 4225 and *Vatican Arab.* 77 and 460.

50) *BHO* 181-182. The Arabic Life translated from Coptic is *i.a.* found in *Göttingen Arab.* 114, *St. Macarius Hag.* 19 and 31 (*ZANETTI* 385 and 397), *Paris Arabe* 153 and 4796, all manuscripts of Coptic provenience. There also seems to be a translation from Syriac in the monastery of St. Marc in Jerusalem. See *GCALI*, 539.

51) Possibly the text of *St. Macarius Hag.* 35 (*ZANETTI* 401).

52) These are often found with Antonian material of manifest Coptic origin, *i.a.* in *Vatican Arab.* 398 and *Sinai Arab.* 550,2.

The Arabic texts and collections are not, however, of importance only as witnesses to lost Coptic originals. On one hand they give us material for an analysis of the characteristic elements of the type of so called Middle Arabic used in the Coptic communities. On the other hand the fact that these texts are generally preserved in collections helps us to understand how the monastic tradition grew and how it was transmitted. It is also of interest to note that the theological legacy of the early monastic movement was preserved very much in a context of traditional wisdom literature.